



W N C O S

Western North Carolina Orchid Society

In the News

for February, 2012

Directory

President's Corner **Orchid Pest Control!** page 2

Growing Tips by Courtney Hackney page 4

Calendar & Officers page 6

Treasurer's Report page 7

For more information, please visit our website

www.wncos.org

The President's Corner

By Graham Ramsey



Greetings All

On January 28th, Leslie, Marc Bruchette and I attended the **International Phalaenopsis** Alliance (IPA) in Hickory. This one day regional meeting included a variety of fascinating lectures and an Amer-

ican Orchid Society judging event. If you would like to learn more about IPA, please go to www.phal.org or contact regional leader Linda Thorne at Orchidlinda@rtmc.net. During the judging portion of the day, our own member Mike Mims received an AM/AOS for one of his amazing crosses, Phalaenopsis (Dragon Tree Eagle 'DT#1' AM/AOS x Joshua Irwin Ginsberg 'Orchid Konnection') 'Marley' AM/AOS. Mike also delivered an excellent talk on Fragrant Phalaenopsis. Congrats to Mike on all fronts!



On **February 12th at 2:00pm**, WNCOS will welcome **Nolan Newton** as our guest speaker. Nolan Newton has been growing orchids for nearly 50 years (He started when he was VERY young.) His first orchid was Catt. Enid "Alba" from Rivermont Orchids in Signal Mountain TN. It survived almost 40 year before a girlfriend's dog ate it, illustrating that some orchid pests are particularly difficult to control. Nolan is retired from the State Health Department, having worked to prevent mosquito and tick-transmitted diseases in NC. He will be speaking on the subject of **Integrated Pest Management**. From windowsill to greenhouse growers, we all have to practice pest control. This will be a program all orchid members can benefit from.

VERY IMPORTANT! At this next meeting, I will be discussing the volunteer opportunities for our annual show to be held at NC Arboretum **March 30th-April 1st**. The sign up list will be passed around during the meeting, so start thinking about how you would like to donate your time. Remember, we are a member driven society, and our show is the best show in the southeast because of you!

It is with sadness that I report the passing of one of our longtime members, Anne Keck. You all will fondly remember Anne's frequent contributions to our show table—baskets full of unique and wonderfully grown miniatures. Anne was an excellent grower and added much to our society over many years. We will miss her.

I look forward to seeing you all on **Sunday, Feb. 12th** at Asheville Eye.

Cheers,

Graham Ramsey

WNCOS presents:

NOLAN NEWTON

ORCHID PEST CONTROL!



Sunday February 12, at 2 pm.

Asheville Eye Associates



GROWING TIPS for February

By

Courtney T. Hackney

Email: Hackneau@comcast.net

During the past year, I have subjected most of my orchid collection to a large-scale experiment regarding fertilizers and media. How much fertilizer does an orchid actually need to grow well and produce large flowers? For the entire year of 2011, fertilizer was applied at very low levels and only during the growing season, March-September. Fertilizer was applied (0.07 teaspoons/gal) weekly for three weeks followed by a week of just water to flush any mineral buildup.

My water is fairly high in dissolved solids and on the basic side. Peters Excel 15-5-15 Cal-Mag provides additional magnesium and nitrogen in the form of nitrate and ammonia, both of which are immediately available to plants. This fertilizer also decreases the pH, which is ideal for my water. Most fertilizers add nitrogen in the form of urea, which requires bacteria and decomposing media before it is available to orchids. Because I grow mostly in lava rock, urea is useless.

What I learned this year is that applications of fertilizer much lower than recommended at a much greater frequency can produce excellent growth and large flowers if there are adequate roots. During my experiment, cattleyas well established in pots with a large root system bloomed with as large and as many flowers as they did with higher nutrients. They also produced nice new pseudobulbs at least at large as previous bulbs.

However, cattleyas that were recently repotted or those that had less developed root systems, often did not bloom or produced smaller flowers. Recently repotted cattleyas grew new roots under this fertilizer regimen, but not nearly as many as cattleyas that had large root systems. This is problematic for newly repotted cattleyas because new roots are important if the orchid is going to regain its previous flowering characteristics.



There were a few cattleyas in the collection that were still in organic media, albeit mostly old decomposing media. In general, these were doing OK as long as the medium was not soft and holding water. Several of these were bifoliate that are poor candidates for repotting unless they are in the process of getting new roots. Occasionally, I miss that period and leave them in the old medium.

This year begins a new experiment. One issue with using lava rock is the space within that allows large “Cucaracha” (roaches) to live in the pots. They emerge at night and eat new roots, flowers and even new growths. The latest experiment is to cover the lava rock with a thin layer of Aliflor. Aliflor is a round artificial rock-like medium. I still have a totally inorganic medium, Aliflor and lava rock, but roaches cannot move to the pot surface where new roots are found. This allows the addition of Nutricote fertilizer because the small Nutricote pellets do not fall through to the bottom of the pot. Over the years, Nutricote has provided a well- balanced and continuous level of nitrogen and other nutrients.

Repotting has begun early this year as warm conditions have caused new roots and growth earlier this year. The sun is already getting stronger so new growth now will just allow an orchid to grow more this year.



Calendar For WNCOS

Feb. 12th—Nolan Newton

Integrated Pest Management for Orchids

March 11th—Prep Meeting for 2012 Annual Orchid Show

March 30th-April 1st—WNCOS Annual Orchid Show!

For further calendar dates please see www.wncos.org

OFFICERS & DIRECTORS:

President- Graham Ramsey	658-0112	g_ram@yahoo.com
Vice President- Brett Hopkins	299-9924	wncosavl@gmail.com
Secretary- Clarke Merrill	230-9982	cmerrill@ads.architects.com
Treasurer- Vicki Patrick	628-5458	vpatrik@charter.net

BOARD MEMBERS:

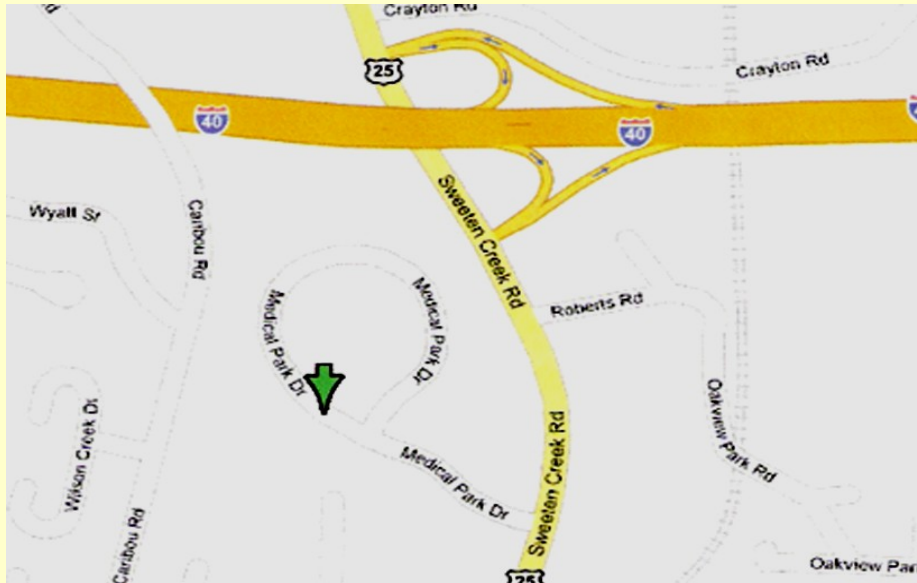
Axel Graumann	337-0035	axelgraumann@charter.net
Randy Latta	252-305-1286	jrandy@aol.com
Nat Scheckler	254-6712	natscheckler@gmail.com

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Leslie Ann Keller	645-4640	leslieannkeller@hughes.net
-------------------	----------	--

All newsletter photos by the editor, except when otherwise noted.

The WNCOS meets the second Sunday of each month, at 2:00 pm at Asheville Eye Associates (see map), unless otherwise announced. The Society Board meets the third Tuesday at CAO 5:30 pm. Meetings are open to all members. General meetings are open to the public.



Asheville Eye Associates , 8 Medical Park Drive

Sweeten Creek Road South to Medical Park Drive. Right on Medical Park Drive and follow the circle to Asheville Eye Associates. If coming in on I-40 take exit 51 (route 25 South) Sweeten Creek Road exit. Right on Medical Park Drive and follow the circle to Asheville Eye Associates.

Treasurer's Report

Checking Account Balance:	\$6,196.76
Small Business Money Market Account:	\$13,887.07
Total:	\$20,083.83